

**ARTICULATED ELECTROSURGICAL PROBE****ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

Systems, apparatus and methods for selectively applying electrical energy to  
5 body tissue in order to ablate, contract, coagulate, or otherwise modify a target tissue or  
organ of a patient. An electrosurgical apparatus of the invention includes a shaft having an  
articulated electrode support at a distal end of the shaft, the electrode support bearing an  
active electrode on an inferior surface of the electrode support, a return electrode in the  
form of a tube, and an electrically insulating return tube tray affixed to the tube, the tube  
10 adapted for delivering an electrically conductive fluid between the active electrode and the  
return electrode. The probe can adopt a closed configuration or an open configuration.  
The closed configuration is adapted for clamping, coagulating, and ablating a target tissue  
while the apparatus is operating in a sub-ablation mode, while the open configuration is  
adapted for severing the target tissue via molecular dissociation of tissue components.

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